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Top Education Resource Hits Milestone

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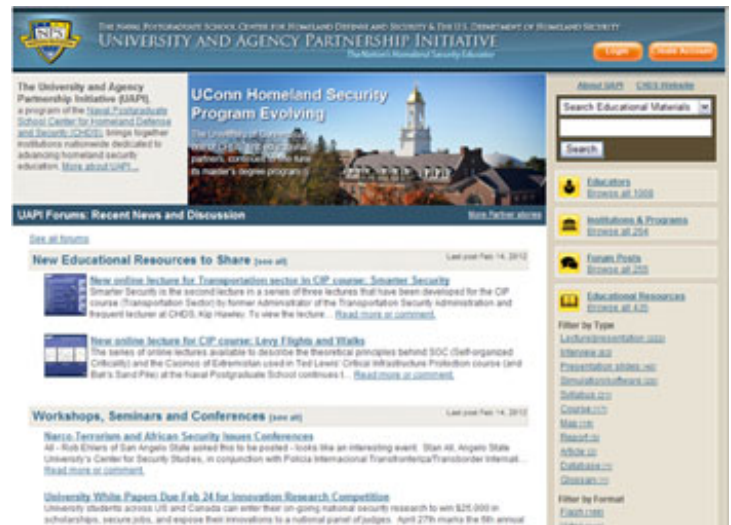
Top Education Resource Hits Milestone

 chds.us/c/item/758

The nation's leading program for establishing and sharing homeland security curricula reached a milestone in late January as the number of education partners topped 1,000.

The Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security's University and Agency Partnership Initiative (UAPI) registered the achievement on January 31, 2011.

In an age of social media that may not seem like a huge number, but in the realm of homeland security education it is telling. Particularly considering that 10 years ago, not a single U.S. university housed a homeland security-specific program.



"That is a controlled Web site so the fact we have reached 1,000 educators is a pretty significant number," said Stan Supinski, director of Partnership Programs at CHDS.

Established in 2006, UAPI's mission is to facilitate educational collaboration among institutions and agencies across the nation to support development of homeland security academic programs. The curriculum is shared freely to lend Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) expertise in order to create a single class offering or establish an entire homeland security program. Many of the 262 institutions which participate tailor the course contents to fit their needs. Users of the site are vetted to ensure they are associated with an educational program.

As new courses and resources are developed by CHDS and other UAPI partners they are also added to the pool of materials to be shared, thereby creating a "multiplier effect" of this program that has extended the Center's reach from hundreds of students to tens of thousands.

In 2011, the CHDS technical staff developed a separate, stand-alone UAPI website to enable greater direct access to educational materials and encourage more participation in academic practitioner discussion forums. Moreover, the site simplified how users can obtain course material by organizing it into video, lectures, slide presentations, syllabi and other offerings.

"They (academics) are in the process of developing courses and using our material," Supinski noted. "We wanted to simplify the process for them getting the materials."

During the coming year, UAPI plans to continue with its semi-annual education and curriculum development conferences, while expanding coursework related to emergency management. In June, UAPI will partner with the Emergency Management Institute in a prototype collaboration at the annual EMI Higher Education Conference. The goal is to establish a full partnership for a homeland security-emergency management conference in 2013. Additionally, UAPI plans on conducting its annual Faculty Development Workshop in August of this year.

Interest in homeland security degree programs at all levels continues to grow. Not only has the number of programs increased, the number of students in them has also risen dramatically. UAPI partner Embry Riddle University, for example, has over 600 students in its undergraduate program. In some case, these homeland security degree programs have become the biggest, in terms of enrollment, on campus. Also noteworthy is that recent growth has

been highest at the community college level, likely due to the Transportation Security Administration's Associates program, which offers classes to its personnel at airports through community college partnerships. UAPI has been a key participant in this program.

"UAPI will continue its mission with both proven approaches and innovative use of resources to enable new homeland security education programs to develop and existing programs to mature and sustain successful activities. Clearly, UAPI has been key to fulfilling CHDS's mantra of being "the Nation's Homeland Security Educator".

Supinski said.

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